THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) The roaming charges levied by different operators have to be within the ceiling tariff prescribed by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). TRAI, after due consultation process with all the stakeholders found justifiable grounds for a review of the tariff structure applicable for roaming services that had been fixed five years back.

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) had submitted that the customer tariffs are already lowest in the world and consistently coming down and thus, roaming tariffs should also be left to market forces.

Based on in-depth analysis of various elements of cost, data on costs, views of stakeholders, the prevailing tariff for calls originated in home networks and other relevant factors, TRAI has prescribed a composite ceiling charges for regional/national roaming effective from 15th February, 2007. The Cellular Operators have already revised roaming tariff accordingly.

Applications under RTI Act

3832. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:
SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of number of applications received under Right to Information Act by his Ministry and associated Departments; and their disposal;

(b) those which have been replied in time;

(c) those whom information has been denied;

(d) those which have either not been replied or replied with wrong information; and

(e) whether Government have ordered inquiry and taken suitable action against erring officers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (d)

The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(e) No action has been taken against any officer as the available information had been given to the applicants.

Tele-density in rural areas of Orissa

3833. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up a common telecom infrastructure that can be shared by multiple service providers to reduce telecom infrastructure cost and improve tele-density in the rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the present tele-density in rural areas of Orissa; and

(d) the action plan to further improve this tele-density in rural areas of Orissa under the above projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A scheme has been launched by the Government to provide support for setting up and managing 7871 number of infrastructure sites spread over 500 districts in the country for provision of mobile services including other Wireless Access Services like Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) using Fixed/Mobile terminals in the specified rural and remote areas of the country including of Orissa, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage.

(c) As on 31st March, 2007, the tele-density of rural areas of Orissa is 2.24%.

(d) Total 432 numbers of towers are to be set up in specified rural and remote areas in 30 districts of Orissa as per details given in the Statement.